

1. A method for rationing ink in a printer, the printer having an ink supply for printing content on print media, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a print job comprising print content;

parsing the print content prior to printing;

if the print content is assigned a priority level, printing the print content in a print mode that is appropriate for the priority level; and

if the print content is not assigned a priority level, printing the print content using a normal print mode.

- 2. The method of claim wherein the print content is comprised of a plurality of at least one section and each section is assigned a priority level.
- 3. The method of claim 2 and further comprising printing each section of the print content in according to the priority level assigned to that particular section.
- 4. The method of claim 2 and further comprising the steps of:

 printing a first section of print content that comprises a low priority level by
 printing the first section in grayscale; and

printing a second section of print content that comprises a high level of priority by printing the second section in the normal print mode.

- 5. The method of claim 1 and further comprising the step of coupling the printer to a computer.
- 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the step of parsing is performed by the computer.

7. A printer having a capability to ration its ink supply in response to the ink supply level, the printer comprising:

a printing device that prints a received print job on print media; and

a controller, coupled to the printing device, that controls the printing device in response to the print job, the controller having means for instructing the printing device to print in an ink-rationing mode in response to the ink supply level.

- 8. The printer of claim 7 wherein the print job comprises content having at least one section, each of the at least one section comprising a priority level.
- 9. The printer of claim 8 wherein the controller further comprises means for instructing the printing device to print in the ink rationing mode in response to both the ink supply level and each priority level
- 10. The printer of claim 7 wherein the ink supply comprises a laser printer toner supply.
- 11. The printer of claim 7 wherein the printing device comprises a thermal inkjet pen.
- 12. The printer of claim 7 wherein the printing device comprises a piezoelectric inkjet pen.
- 13. A printer having a capability to ration its ink supply in response to the ink supply level, the printer comprising:

a printing device that prints a received print job on print media, the print job having sections of content each section comprising a priority level; and

a controller, coupled to the printing device, that controls the printing device in response to the print job, the controller comprising means for instructing the printing



device to print a first section of content in an ink-rationing mode in response to at least one of the ink supply level and the first section priority level.

14. A method for generating a print document that can be printed in an ink rationing printer, the method comprising the steps of:

generating content that is comprised of at least one section;

assigning a print priority level to each section of the at least one section of the content; and

generating the print document comprising the content and the at least one priority level.

- 15. The method of claim 14 wherein the at least one print priority level is a minimum print priority level.
 - 16. The method of claim 15 and further including the steps of:

transmitting the print document to a printer having an ink rationing mode, the ink rationing mode printing the content in response to a printer ink supply level and the at least one priority level; and

generating a charge of a predetermined monetary value if the print document is printed at a priority level that is less than the minimum print priority level.

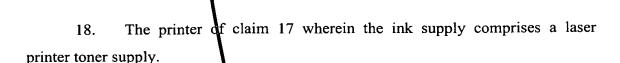
17. In a printer comprising an ink supply for printing content on print media, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a print job comprising print content;

parsing the print content prior to printing

if the print content is assigned a priority level, printing the print content in a print mode that is appropriate for the priority level, and

if the print content is not assigned a priority level, printing the print content using a normal print mode.



19. A printer having a capability to ration its ink supply, the printer comprising:

a printing device that prints a received print job on print media, the print job having sections of content each section comprising a print priority level; and

a controller, coupled to the printing device, that controls the printing device in response to the print job, the controller comprising:

means for parsing the print content to determine each print priority level of each section of content; and

means for instructing the printing device to print a first section of content in an ink-rationing mode in response to at least one of the ink supply level and the first section priority level.

- 20. The printer of claim 19 wherein the ink rationing mode comprises printing in a grayscale mode.
- 21. In a system comprising a computer coupled to a printer, the printer having an ink supply for printing content on print media, the method comprising the steps of:

the computer receiving a print job comprising print content, the content having at least one section;

the computer parsing the print content to determine at least one print priority level for each section of the at least one section;

the computer generating a print job in response to the content and the at least one print priority level;

transmitting the print job to the printer; and

printing the print job in response to the content and the at least one print priority level.



- The system of claim 21 wherein the step of printing comprises printing 22. the content in an ink rationing mode in response to the at least one print priority level.
- The system of claim 22 wherein the ink rationing mode comprises 23. printing the content in grayscale.

1